



International Agricultural Trade Report

Dairy, Livestock, & Poultry Trade Update

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USDA Estimates of U.S. Meat Exports Adjusted for Russia Food Aid Shipments

Recent Dairy, Livestock and Poultry Division (DLP) publications have noted that trade data published by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census do not accurately account for the beef, pork, and poultry that the United States shipped to Russia as part of the Russian food aid program in late 1999 and early 2000. Due to technical difficulties, meat food aid shipments that took place from September through December 1999 do not appear in data published by Census for those months. As a result, U.S. total meat exports for 1999 are underestimated by the amount of the Russian food aid shipments. In 2000, Census data for January and February show significant increases in beef, pork, and poultry exports to Russia, despite limited commercial sales and the end of the food aid shipments. This suggests that some of the food aid shipments from 1999 were incorrectly recorded as exports in the first two months of 2000, thereby overestimating year 2000 total U.S. meat exports to date.

Trade numbers published by the Bureau of the Census are recognized as the official U.S. government trade data. Since these numbers are included in USDA publications, the discrepancies in Russia meat trade data have the potential to distort U.S. supply and demand balances. USDA adjusted estimates for meat exports to Russia to reflect volumes of food aid which proprietary data indicate were shipped to Russia during 1999 and early 2000. Total meat exports were then adjusted based on the estimates of exports to Russia.

The USDA estimate for total beef exports on a carcass weight basis in 1999 is raised 3.5 percent to account for the revised Russia numbers. The estimate for total pork exports in 1999 is increased 10 percent, and the estimate for total poultry exports is increased 2 percent. Based on these upward revisions, U.S. beef, pork, and poultry exports in 1999 increased 11 percent, 5 percent, and 2 percent, respectively, compared to 1998.

The tables below show the revised estimates for U.S. beef, pork, and poultry exports, U.S. Census data of U.S. meat exports to Russia, and the preliminary estimates of U.S. meat exports to Russia. These exports are presented on a product weight basis, consistent with U.S. Census data and with the monthly U.S. Trade and Prospects circular published by DLP. Note that other FAS and USDA publications, like the World Markets and Trade circular published by DLP and the monthly World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates published by the WAOB use carcass weight equivalents for meat trade data. It is also important to note that the BICO reports do not reflect these changes.

Revised Estimates for Total U.S. Beef, Pork, and Poultry Exports (1,000 tons)						
	1999 Quarter I	1999 Quarter II	1999 Quarter III	1999 Quarter IV	1999 Annual	2000 Quarter I
Beef	188	186	208	222	804	218
Pork	93	106	101	148	448	113
Poultry	546	620	648	744	2,558	712

*Figures expressed in product weight equivalent based on revised USDA carcass weight equivalent estimates.

The revised estimate for total beef exports to Russia in 1999 includes an increase of about 26,000 tons (product weight equivalent) to account for the revised Russia numbers. The estimate for total pork exports in 1999 includes an increase of about 46,000 tons, and the estimate for total poultry exports includes an increase of nearly 57,000 tons.

Official Bureau of Census Data for Meat Exports to Russia (1,000 tons)						
	1999 Quarter I	1999 Quarter II	1999 Quarter III	1999 Quarter IV	1999 Annual	2000 Quarter I
Beef	1	0	0	2	3	38
Pork	1	0	0	3	4	46
Poultry	61	28	48	107	243	179

Preliminary Estimates for Meat Exports to Russia (1,000 tons)						
	1999 Quarter I	1999 Quarter II	1999 Quarter III	1999 Quarter IV	1999 Annual	2000 Quarter I
Beef	1	0	10	17	28	12
Pork	1	0	1	47	49	2
Poultry	61	28	61	150	300	122

USDA is working with Census to revise the official trade data to accurately reflect when the Russian food aid shipments occurred. The technical problems have been resolved, and complete shipping data was transmitted to Census. Bureau of the Census trade numbers will be adopted when available.

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